

# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Reader,

It is with great pleasure that I present to you the 11th issue of the student journal of the Philosophy, Politics and Economics Program at Penn. I applied to Penn with the intent to major in PPE, and over the past four years, my journey as a PPE major has been nothing short of exemplary! I believe that the program gives a student the knowledge and tools to engage in meaningful metapragmatic discourse about almost any social phenomenon in the world; may it be the electoral debates, government policy, markets or ethics. As students of philosophy we learn to think deeply and logically about issues; as students of political science we learn the value and inner-workings of human institutions; and as students of economics we learn how to analyze the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services. The Program situates you at the crossroads of several interesting subjects and debates, and is a true epitome of Penn's interdisciplinary education.

This year's issue of SPICE, like prior publications, showcases the remarkable achievements that can emerge from this interdisciplinary education. *Striking the Balance between Privacy and Governance in the Age of Technology* closely examines the tradeoff between advancement in surveillance technology and the privacy of a citizen and explores the ethical implications. *Law and Economics of Databases* presents an economic analysis of the current scope of legal protections for databases versus the ideal, with an emphasis on the role of intellectual property rights in providing these protections. *A Theoretical Account of Electoral Reform in the UK* utilizes salient theories of electoral reform to provide an in-depth analysis of the two occasions of reform propositions in 1997 and 2011 in the UK. *Energy Policy* addresses the tensions between federal, state and local governments in the design and implementation of energy regulatory policy. *Questioning the Advances in Global Trade* offers a content-based analysis of the Trans-Pacific Partnership's Development chapter to gauge the value of its addition.

I am proud to present each of these papers as they illustrate one or more of the Five Themes of Study that students may pursue as a PPE Major: Choice & Behavior, Ethics and the Professions, Distributive Justice, Public Policy & Governance, and Globalization.

The Editorial Board reviewed many outstanding papers and we are appreciative of all those who submitted their work for consideration. This journal would not be possible without the exemplary effort of its contributors, authors and editors. I applaud their enthusiasm for the Program, as well as their expressed commitment to research and scholarship in general, and in the PPE disciplines specifically.

On behalf of the Board, I extend my appreciation to Dr. Doug Paletta for his

invaluable guidance and support. He has been our strength through this process and this would not have been possible without him! He also deserves our deep gratitude for serving as a mentor and academic advisor during our tenure at Penn.

I am confident that the level of scholarship presented in these pages will inspire thought, reflection, and healthy discourse. More importantly it is my hope that it encourages action. While scholarship for its own sake is a worthy use of intellect, it should be most admired when used to solve the problems we face in the world. I urge the students of PPE to capitalize on their ability to understand issues through these multiple lenses as they go into the world and tackle its many challenges, all with the goal of making a rich contribution and powerful impact.

To the students, parents, faculty, alumni, and friends of the PPE Program at Penn, the Editorial Board and I hope that you enjoy this year's issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ira Gupta". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping "I" and a cursive "Gupta".

Ira Gupta  
Editor-In-Chief